

Marshall earns NASA Small Business Administrator's Cup award -- twice in three years

By Rick Smith

On March 24, NASA Administrator Charles Bolden presented the agency's Small Business Administrator's Cup Award for fiscal year 2010 to the Marshall Space Flight Center.

It's the second time in three years Marshall has earned the accolade, which is given annually to the NASA center that has demonstrated the most successful and effective small business program. The Marshall Center previously received the Small Business Administrator's Cup for fiscal year 2008, the year the award was created.

Bolden and Glenn Delgado, assistant administrator of NASA's Office of Small Business Programs in Washington, presented the honor to Marshall Center Director Robert Lightfoot and Marshall small business specialist David Brock.

The award presentation was held during the Marshall Small Business Alliance's meeting at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center's Davidson Center for Space Exploration. The quarterly event provides networking opportunities and encouragement for businesses to compete for procurement and subcontracting opportunities.

"Small business is crucial not only to NASA, but to the nation," Bolden said. "Federal procurement opportunities for women, minority and veteran-owned small businesses are critical to the economy and to sustaining economic development. Marshall's commitment to the small business community, along with its broad and diverse portfolio, is why the center is being recognized."

"I am extremely proud of the Marshall small business team, and its dedication to nurturing the small business partners and enterprises that are key to the success of our programs and projects," Lightfoot said. "To be recognized twice in three years for that dedication reflects the strength of our small business program, and our commitment to creating and maintaining the kind of mutually rewarding partnerships that will carry on NASA's mission into the next era of space exploration and discovery."

Sponsored by the NASA Office of Small Business Programs, the award recognizes the winning center's implementation of successful, innovative practices that promote the participation of small businesses in helping NASA achieve its mission. It also honors the significant contributions of that center's senior management, procurement office and program and technical personnel to the agency's small business programs.

When the Marshall Center first received the Administrator's Cup, it had just celebrated the Marshall Small Business Alliance's first year of operation. The alliance, a regional conduit to help small businesses pursue NASA procurement and subcontracting opportunities, has since established itself as a vital resource for thousands of small businesses.

"Our successes start with our management. Their continuing support has created a positive environment in which to promote small business utilization across all organizations at the Marshall Center," said David Brock, who organized the Small Business Alliance. Last

December, he received the NASA Small Business Specialist of the Year award for fiscal 2010.

Brock also credits Marshall's large business prime contractors, which helped provide approximately \$435 million in total subcontracting awards to small businesses in fiscal 2010, and two center organizations: the Marshall Prime Contractor Supplier Council, which includes representatives of 45 large businesses; and the Marshall Small Business Executive Leadership Team, comprised of representatives of 27 small businesses.

"The key is teamwork," he said.

For more information about the NASA Small Business Administrator's Cup Award and NASA's Office of Small Business Programs, visit <http://www.osbp.nasa.gov>.

Smith, an AI Signal Research Inc. employee, supports the Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications.

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Showing off the NASA Small Business Administrator's Cup award are, from left to right, Glenn Delgado, assistant administrator of NASA's Office of Small Business Programs in Washington; Byron Butler, director of the Marshall Center's Office of Procurement; David Brock, Marshall small business specialist; NASA Administrator Charles Bolden; and Marshall Center Director Robert Lightfoot. (MSFC/Doug Stoffer)